

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 197147

EXDIS FOR AMB YOUNG FROM UNA

FOLLOWING REPEAT ATHENS 6666 ACTION SECSTATE INFO ANKARA
NICOSIA DATED AUG 03:

QTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 6666

EXDIS

EUR ALSO FOR AMBASSADOR MCCLOSKEY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, PGOV, GR, US

SUBJ: FOREIGN RELATIONS: IMPACT OF CONGRESSIONAL EMBARGO ACTION
ON THE POSITION OF KARAMANLIS

1. AS OUR REPORTING HAS INDICATED, THERE IS VIRTUALLY UNI-
VERSAL CONDEMNATION BY GREEKS OF THE SENATE AND HOUSE VOTES
TO LIFT THE EMBARGO. FOR MOST, IF NOT ALL, GREEKS, THE
EMBARGO ACTION WAS SEEN PRIMARILY AS AN ISSUE OF JUSTICE AND
MORALITY. FOR THE MAJORITY WHICH HAS IDENTIFIED GREECE'S IN-
TERESTS WITH THE US, IT ALSO INVOLVED QUESTIONS OF FRIENDSHIP
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AND LOYALTY. THE MOST COMMON FEELINGS WE HEAR EXPRESSED ARE
OF DISAPPOINTMENT, BITTERNESS AND BETRAYAL.

2. FURTHERMORE, DESPITE OUR PROTESTATIONS TO THE CONTRARY,
MOST GREEKS THINK THE LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO MEANS THAT FOR
STRATEGIC REASONS THE US HAS CHOSEN TURKEY OVER GREECE. THE
ARMS MOST GREEKS FEAR WILL NOW FLOW TO TURKEY HAVE LED TO CON-

CERN OVER THE GREEK- TURKISH MILITARY BALANCE AND OVER THE THREAT
GREEKS PERCEIVE OF POSSIBLE TURKISH AGGRESSIVENESS
IN THE AEGEAN.

3. THE GREEK REACTION IS ALSO ONE OF DISAPPOINTMENT IN
PRESIDENT CARTER WHO, IN THEIR EYES, HAS GONE BACK ON
HIS CAMPAIGN PROMISES. MOREOVER, THEY CANNOT UNDERSTAND
WHAT TO THEM APPEARS TO BE A LACK OF INTEREST IN THE
HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION ON CYPRUS WHEN THE PRESIDENT IS
ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS ELSEWHERE.

4. ALL THIS CANNOT HELP BUT HAVE SOME IMPACT ON THE
POSITION OF PRIME MINISTER KARAMANLIS IN THIS COUNTRY IN
VIEW OF HIS OPEN AND UNEQUIVOCAL PRO-AMERICAN, PRO-WESTERN
STANCE (AS MOST GREEKS SEE IT). SEVERAL MINISTERS AND
OTHER SENIOR GOG OFFICIALS HAVE TOLD US IN RECENT DAYS THAT
THE LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO UNDERMINES KARAMANLIS' POSITION.
ALTHOUGH THERE UNDOUBTEDLY IS AN ELEMENT OF TACTICAL MAN-
EUVERING IN THIS, WE BASICALLY AGREE. THIS DOES NOT MEAN,
WE HASTEN TO ADD, THAT KARAMANLIS' STRONG POSITION OF
LEADERSHIP IS THREATENED OR THAT HE WILL BE FORCED TO CHANGE
THE POLICY ORIENTATION HE HAS CHARTED FOR GREECE. IN-
EVITABLY, HOWEVER, THE REACTION AMONG GREEKS OF ALL SOCIAL
STRATA TO THE LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO WILL STRENGTHEN
PAPANDREOU'S POSITION AND MAKE HIM MORE CREDIBLE IN HIS
ATTACKS AGAINST KARAMANLIS' PRO-WESTERN POLICIES. CONVERSELY,
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KARAMANLIS' CREDIBILITY AND PRESTIGE HAVE BEEN TARNISHED AND
AN ELECTION TODAY WOULD PROBABLY SHOW SOME DROP IN THE
POPULAR VOTE FOR HIM.

5. WE BELIEVE THAT A CABINET MEMBER PUT IT QUITE
ACCURATELY WHEN HE TOLD US YESTERDAY THE REAL DILEMMA THE
LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO POSES FOR KARAMANLIS IS HOW, IN
THE LIGHT OF THIS ACTION, TO EXPLAIN AND JUSTIFY HIS PRO-
WEST POLICY IN THE MONTHS AHEAD. HOW, FOR EXAMPLE,
DOES HE ANNOUNCE GREECE'S RETURN TO FULLER PARTICIPATION
IN NATO A FEW MONTHS HENCE, WHEN NEGOTIATIONS HOPEFULLY
WILL BE CONCLUDED IN BRUSSELS.

6. THUS, AS WE SEE IT, THE PROBLEM THE LIFTING OF THE
EMBARGO POSES FOR KARAMANLIS IS NOT PRIMARILY ONE OF TODAY
(HE CAN UNDOUBTEDLY WEATHER THE SHORT-TERM STORM),
BUT OF THE FUTURE. AND THE OUTCOME WILL DEPEND HEAVILY
ON EVENTS AND DEVELOPMENTS LARGELY OUTSIDE HIS OWN CONTROL,
I.E. WHETHER PROGRESS IS MADE TOWARD A CYPRUS SETTLEMENT
SOON AND HOW GREEK-TURKISH BILATERAL RELATIONS EVOLVE.
THE GREEKS, AND KARAMANLIS HIMSELF, HAVE RECEIVED WITH
REAL RESERVATIONS OUR WORDS OF EXPECTATION THAT FOLLOWING

THE LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO TURKEY WILL BE MORE FORTHCOMING
IN MOVING TOWARD AN EQUITABLE CYPRUS SETTLEMENT.
THEY BELIEVE THAT PRESSURE WILL HAVE TO BE APPLIED ON
THE TURKS TO MAKE THEM LESS INTRANSIGENT. IN THE ABSENCE
OF THE EMBURGO THEY WILL BE WATCHING TO SEE HOW WE BRING
OUR INFLUENCE TO BEAR ON ANKARA TO ACHIEVE AN AGREEMENT
ON CYPRUS. THIS, IN FACT, APPEARS TO BE THE LINE THE GREEKS
ARE ALREADY TAKING, HERE AND IN NICOSIA.

7. IN SUM, HOW BADLY KARAMANLIS WAS HURT DOMESTICALLY
BY THE LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO WILL, IN OUR VIEW, DEPEND
ON HOW QUICKLY PROGRESS CAN BE MADE ON THE CYPRUS PROBLEM
AND TURKISH BEHAVIOR ON AEGEAN ISSUES.

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